

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6301
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION NATO
USCINCEUR

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, BE
SUBJECT: CHANGES IN FOREIGN MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM

REF: STATE 51768

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING IS OUR ESTIMATE OF BOTH SHORT AND LONG TERM EFFECTS OF CHANGES IN FMTA. SOME SHORT TERM DISLOCATIONS ARE APT TO OCCUR, FOLLOWED BY LONG TERM DEGRADATION OF MILITARY-TO-MILITARY RELATIONS. EFFECT OF TOTALITY OF US-BELGIAN BILATERAL RELATIONS WILL NOT BE SERIOUS, BUT ARE LIKELY TO REINFORCE PRESENT EUROPEAN TENDENCIES TO GO THEIR OWN WAY SEPARATE FROM THE U.S.
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U.S. WOULD CLEARLY LOSE A MAJOR OPPORTUNITY TO

INFLUENCE BELGIAN MILITARY RE U.S. MILITARY DOCTRINE AND
VALUE OF U.S. MILITARY MATERIEL. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING ARE OUR ESTIMATES:COMMENTS ON IMPACT OF
INCREASED COSTS ON FUTURE FMTP KEYED TO PARA 5 REFTEL:

(5.A.) IMPACT ON BILATERAL US-BELGIAN RELATIONS

WHEN NEW COSTS BECOME KNOWN WILL BE BOTH IMMEDIATE AND
LONGRUN. IMEDIATE EFFECT WILL PROBABLY BE BELGIAN
BELIEF THAT USG COMMITTED BREACH OF CONTRACT, AT LEAST
IN SPITE, BY EX POST FACTO INCREASE IN TRAINING COSTS
WHICH BELGIAN DEFENSE MINISTRY HAD NOT PROGRAMMED.
BELGIAN TRAINING COSTS ARE FORECAST TWO YEARS IN ADVANCE
AND TIED TO DEFENSE BUDGET WITH THAT LEAD TIME. ABRUPT
CHANGE IN COSTS OF U.S. TRAINING WILL CAUSE BELGIAN
MILITARY SOME DIFFICULTY, BUT SHOULD NOT AFFECT OVERALL
BILATERAL US-BELGIAN RELATIONS SIGNIFICATNLY.

(5.B.) AS BELGIANS PAY FOR ALL TRAINING RECEIVED
IN U.S. (WITH EXCEPTION OF TWO NON-MAP COURSES, ONE CGSC
AND ONE CAREER COURSE), THEIR INTEREST IS ACCURATELY
REFLECTED BY LIST OF PRESENT TRAINING PROGRAMMED. THIS
INCLUDES: ARMY, C&GS COURSE - 1, CAREER COURSES
(INFANTRY, ARMOR, ARTILLERY) - 3, MISCELLANEOUS
(TRANSPORT, PIO) - 2, LANCE - 38, NAVY, - NONE; AND
AIR FORCE, PILOT AND NAVIGATOR TRAINING FOR C-130S - 9
NIKE/HERCULES - 31, AND ELECTRONIC WARFARE STAFF
COURSE - 2, PLUS PILOT TRAINING ON F-16 FORESEEN IN
FUTURE FOR UP TO 150 AT PRESENT PRICES.

IF COST OF SUCH TRAINING IN U.S. RISES SIGNIFICANTLY,
BELGIANS WILL HAVE TO DECIDE WHAT ALTERNATIVS THEY
HAVE TO CONTINUING TRAINING IN THE U.S. AT HIGHER PRICE.
SOME TRAING CAN MOST LIKELY BE SHIFTED ELSEWHERE (C-130,
INFANTRY, ETC.); SOME, ON UNIQUE U.S. EQUIPMENT,
CANNOT (NIKE-HERCULES, F-16). BELGAINS ARE APT TO
CUT BACK ON ALL TYPES OF TRAINING IN U.S. AVAILABLE
ELSEWHERE IN ORDER TO COME UP WITH FUNDS REQUIRED FOR
U.S. COURSES FOR WHICH THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE. BELTIANS
WILL TRY MIGHTILY NOT TO INCREASE THEIR MILITARY TRAINING
BUDGET. AFTER PAYING FOR ESSENTIAL U.S. COURSES AND
PAYING FOR OTHER COURSES WHERE SUCH TRAINING MAY BE
AVAILABLE, THERE ARE NOT APT TO BE FUNDS LEFT AVAILABLE

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FOR OPTIONAL MILITARY TRAINING IN U.S. AT INCREASED PRICES.

(5.C.) THE TYPES OF TRAINING OF GREATEST BENEFIT
TO THE U.S. ARE BASICALLY THE SAME AS THOSE THE BELGIANS
PRESENTLY PURCHASE. WHILE SOME OF THE TRAINING SOUGHT
IS OF A TECHNICAL NATURE, CAREER ORIENTED COURSES ARE
FOR CAREFULLY SELECTED OFFICERS OF VARIOUS LEVELS WHO
ARE THOUGHT TO HAVE A FUTURE IN THE BELGIAN MILITARY.
THE ADVANTAGE OF PRESENT TRAINING TO THE USG IS TO HAVE

INFLUENCE ON A WIDE RANGE OF ABLE AND INFLUENTIAL
BELGIAN MILITARY OFFICERS AT DIFFERENT STAGES
IN THEIR CAREERS.

THE ONLY NON-MPA ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BELGIUM IS FOR
THE OFFICERS WHO ATTEND THE C&GS AND ONE CAREER COURSE
ANNUALLY ON A TUITION FREE BASIS, THOUGH BELGIUM PAYS
FOR ALL THEIR OTHER EXPENSES. IF THESE OFFICERS ARE
CHARGED TUITION WHICH PRESENTLY WAIVED AS NON-MAP
(WE UNDERSTAND C&GS TUITION MAY GO FROM THE PRESENT
WAIVED APPROXIMATELY \$3,000 TO \$18,000), WE WOULD
EXPECT BELGIUM TO STOP SENDING STUDENTS. THERE IS NO
MAP GRANT AID PROGRAM IN BELGIUM.

(5.D.) SEE 5. B. ABOVE. NOTE ALSO THAT A HYPO-
THETICAL DOUBLING OF THE COST OF U.S. TRAINING WILL
MORE THAN HALVE THE NUMBER OF BELGIANS BEING TRAINED
IN THE U.S. BELGIUM WILL STILL HAVE TO FIND FUNDS
FOR SOME TRAINING IN THE U.S. WHICH ITS NEEDS AND
CANNOT GET ALSEWHERE, AND WILL HAVE TO PAY FOR TRAINING
AT LATERNATIVE LOCATIONS. THUS, EVEN LESS FUNDS MAY
BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE OF U.S. TRAINING. IN ADDI-
TION BELGIUM WILL DELIBERATELY SEEK ALTERNATIVES TO
TRAINING IN THE U.S. AS IT IS VERY APT TO DECIDE
THAT TRAINING IN THE U.S. IS NOT SOMETHING ON WHICH
IT CAN COUNT IN THE LONG RUN. BELGIUM WILL THUS
CONSCIOUSLY SEEK MORE STABLE AND CHEAPER EUROPEAN
ALTERNATIVES.

(5.E.) BELGIUM WILL LOOK FOR ALTERNATIVES TO U.S.
TRAINING WITHIN THE EC-9. SOME TRAING MAY BE
EASY TO SHFIT (C&GS, CAREER COURSES, SOME PILOT TRAINING)
TO SCHOOLS ALREADY IN EXISTENCE, PARTICULARLY IN FRANCE,
GERMANY AND THE U.K. ALTERNATIVE COURSES MAY WELL BE
CREATED BY THE EC-9 ON A COORDINATED BASIS TO FILL THE
VOID LEFT BY THE U.S. THAT VOID WOULD AFFECT SEVERAL
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EUROPEAN COUNTRIES PRESENTLY DEPENDING ON THE U.S.
SOME EUROPEANS MAY WELL WELCOME SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY AS
A CHANCE TO WORK IN CONCRETE TERMS TOWARDS BETTER
SECURITY COORDINATION WITHIN EUROPE, DELIBERATELY LEAVING
THE U.S. OUT. WE UNDERSTAND, THAT THE FRG IS
ALREADY SETTING UP A LANCE TRAINING PROGRAM AS AN
ALTERNATIVE TO THAT OFFERED BY THE U.S.
THE EFFECT OF SUCH SWITCHING ON THE MILITARY
COMPETENCE OF BELGIAN TRAINEES WOULD BE MINIMAL ON
THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE FRENCH, GERMAN AND BRITISH
MILITARY ARE AS HIGHLY COMPETENT IN MOST FIELDS AS IS
THE U.S. MILITARY. THERE WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE A SERIOUS
DEGRADATION IN BELGIAN INTEREST IN U.S. MILITARY
MATERIEL AND DOCTRINE ALMOST FROM THE BEGINNING. THE
IMPACT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS WOULD BE SLOW TO BE

FELT, BUT GROW SOMEWHAT OVER TIME AS CONTACT AND
U.S. INFLUENCE DIMINISHES BETWEEN WORKING LEVEL
MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS.
(5.F.) NO APPLICABLE. FIRESTONE

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